



January 15, 2010

Robert W. Healy
City Manager
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear City Manager Healy:

I am pleased to submit Cambridge Health Alliance's annual report to the City of Cambridge. The State of Massachusetts and the nation are going through unprecedented times. The widespread interest in national healthcare reform makes this an exciting time for the medical industry. The goal of this reform is to reduce medical expense while expanding health insurance coverage and access to healthcare. The state of Massachusetts, and specifically Commonwealth Care, is being looked at as a model for the nation. Cambridge Health Alliance, as a key player in Commonwealth Care, is hopeful that any healthcare reform on a national level will focus on:

- Primary care and prevention
- Creation of Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs)
- Creating a patient-centered medical home (PCMH)
- Payment reform

Despite our challenging year of reconfiguration, Cambridge Health Alliance continues to excel in providing high quality and safe patient care while offering continued access to essential health care services for the residents of Cambridge. This year was also filled with many accomplishments for Cambridge Health Alliance as a whole, and the Public Health Department specifically, as follows:

Cambridge Health Alliance:

- Continued exceptional performance in publicly reported quality core measures for congestive heart failure, pneumonia, acute myocardial infarction (heart attack), and surgical care infection prevention; meeting or outperforming both national and statewide standards.
- First breast center in the state of Massachusetts to receive accreditation by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC).
- Third year in a row to receive honors from the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Honor Roll for Pediatrics.
- Proactive stance against H1N1 and seasonal flu. One of the top performing healthcare organizations in the state in vaccinating the most employees, staff, volunteers, and contractors.

Cambridge Public Health Department:

- New regulation which prohibits biosafety level four (BSL-4) laboratories from operating in Cambridge.
- Over 3,200 doses of H1N1 vaccine administered to the CDC-established priority populations in Cambridge, many of them children and preschoolers who received the vaccine either in school or through their daycare providers.
- The launch of a new program called "Cut It Out Cambridge," which trains hair stylists in ways to help clients who may be domestic violence victims.
- The implementation of a pilot grant focused on "Investigating Weight Disparities among African-American and Black Youth in Cambridge" in collaboration with the Institute for Community Health and the Cambridge School Health Division.
- Chief Public Health Officer Claude-Alix Jacob received the 2009 "Drum Major for Health" award from the Cambridge Branch of the NAACP.
- Public Health Nurse Florence Grant, RN, received the 2009 Tuberculosis (TB) Hero award from the New England Tuberculosis Consortium.

Sincerely,



Dennis D. Keefe

Chief Executive Officer, Cambridge Health Alliance
Commissioner of Public Health, City of Cambridge

Cc: Claude-Alix Jacob, MPH

2009 Public Health Activities of Cambridge Health Alliance

January 15, 2010

Cambridge Public Health Department
Cambridge Health Alliance

Overview

Public health must emphasize prevention and embrace collective, multifaceted action to respond to emerging challenges to health practitioners and researchers; it must investigate disease determinants and risks, improve health care quality and delivery, and influence policy.

–Harvard School of Public Health, 2009

The Cambridge Public Health Commission, doing business as “Cambridge Health Alliance,” was established as a public authority on June 30, 1996 through a special act of the Massachusetts legislature. Prior to this event, The Cambridge Hospital and the public health department were owned and operated by the City of Cambridge.

The Cambridge Public Health Department enforces existing laws and regulations pertaining to public health, and has the statutory authority to make and enforce new public health regulations within the City of Cambridge. The Cambridge Public Health Department exercises its statutory authority under Massachusetts General Laws, chapters 111, 112, and 114. As a result of a Memorandum of Agreement signed in 1983, the city’s Inspectional Services Department assumes responsibility for several major categories of public health code enforcement. (For more information, see “Policy and Regulatory Activities” in the Cambridge Public Health Department section.)

Dennis Keefe serves as the Commissioner of Public Health and delegates the department’s operations to Claude-Alix Jacob, Chief Public Health Officer. The public health department is advised by the Cambridge Public Health Subcommittee of the Cambridge Health Alliance Board of Trustees, the Community Health Advisory Council (formerly the Joint Public Health Board), and the Health and Environment Committee of the Cambridge City Council. The Cambridge Public Health Department works closely with the City Manager, City Council, the School Committee, and all city departments.

Local Health Department Responsibilities

In 2005, the National Association of County and City Health Officials developed an “Operational Definition of a Functional Local Public Health Department” outlining ten fundamental responsibilities of local public health departments. These responsibilities (often referred to as the “ten essential services of public health”) were developed within nationally recognized frameworks and with input from public health professionals and elected officials across the country. They are linked to the three core functions of public health (assessment, policy development, assurance) established by the Institute of Medicine in 1988. The ten essential services of public health are:

1. Monitor health status to identify community health problems
2. Diagnose and investigate identified health problems and health hazards in the community

3. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues
4. Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems
5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts
6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety
7. Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable
8. Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce
9. Assess effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services
10. Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems

The Cambridge Public Health Department, in partnership with the Cambridge Health Alliance Department of Community Affairs and the Institute for Community Health, ensures that these obligations are met by providing sophisticated public health and health promotion services to city residents, collecting and analyzing data, and developing programs in response to community-defined needs. In addition, Cambridge Health Alliance provides high quality health care to Cambridge residents of all backgrounds.

In fiscal year 2010, the Cambridge Public Health Department brought in approximately \$3 million in state, federal, and private foundation funding, with the lion's share of this support made available as a result of the pandemic flu activities. The department's direct expense budget was \$4.9 million. In addition to direct expenses, the Cambridge Health Alliance provides substantial support to the Teen Health Center, Institute for Community Health, maintenance, utilities, and other overhead costs; and salaries for the school health medical director and infectious disease physician consultants. These direct and indirect expenses account for the \$6 million appropriation received from the City of Cambridge during this period.

2009 Cambridge Highlights: The Cambridge Public Health Department

In 2009, the critical importance of local public health departments in protecting the public against disease pandemics was highlighted, as the Cambridge Public Health Department anticipated and responded to the threat of H1N1 (swine) flu. In April, the earliest cases in Massachusetts occurred in Cambridge graduate students and quickly spread to Cambridge day cares and schools. Over the ensuing months and into the early fall, the Cambridge Public Health Department tracked the development of this pandemic worldwide, trained staff and volunteers to respond appropriately, and developed communications materials and strategies to help the public and Cambridge-based organizations protect themselves against this new threat.

H1N1 and Seasonal Flu Planning and Response

In late April 2009, Cambridge and the nation learned of the first US cases of “swine flu” in California. Nursing staff at CPHD responded to calls from concerned residents and consulted with daycare centers and other providers, while school health staff worked with schools to disseminate materials to teachers and families. Hospital preparedness staff helped ensure that clinical sites were adequately stocked with supplies of masks, antivirals, and rapid flu tests.

In May and June, nurses followed up on 31 confirmed H1N1 cases in Cambridge residents, including 5 individuals who were hospitalized. Epidemiology staff created a map of confirmed H1N1 cases in Cambridge. The health department organized regular briefings with clinical and administrative leadership, helped manage supplies of antivirals and personal protective equipment, and began making vaccination plans for fall/winter. Cambridge Public Health Department instituted a weekly report of flu-related activities that included Cambridge confirmed cases, statewide and national trends, local emergency preparedness, and clinical responses. This *SitReport* was provided on a regular basis to the Cambridge City Manager as well as the Commissioner of Public Health.

The department’s School Health division responded to the H1N1 flu outbreak in the community by following up on confirmed cases, providing guidance to child care programs, distributing educational materials at community events, issuing news releases, and posting website updates. In collaboration with the department’s public health nurses, school health staff worked to monitor all children for influenza illness, send ill children home and keep them out of school for seven days.

No new cases emerged in the summer months, and department staff used the time to prepare for what promised to be a complex and demanding flu season. A cross-department group met weekly to plan for large-scale vaccination clinics in the fall, including “Operation Granger,” a flu clinic designed to double as an emergency dispensing site exercise. In July, staff facilitated antiviral treatment for inmates of the Middlesex County Jail who had been diagnosed with H1N1. Department staff also participated fully in statewide planning for the expected fall outbreak.

By September, CPHD was faced with the need to plan two separate flu vaccination campaigns: one for seasonal flu, and the second for a much anticipated H1N1 vaccine. Responding to federal and state

requests that health departments schedule seasonal flu clinics early. CPHD planned its entire seasonal flu clinic schedule for October. In nine days in early October, CPHD dispensed 2,500 doses of seasonal flu vaccine, almost as much as is usually given in an entire season. A very successful "family-friendly" flu clinic at the Tobin School dispensed 1,360 doses in two hours. The outcome of the half-day blitz was made possible by the coordinated effort of several departments including School, Fire/EMS, Police, Traffic and Parking, and Public Works. By October 17, vaccine supplies were exhausted, and CPHD learned of manufacturing and shipping delays for both seasonal and H1N1 vaccines. The department was forced to postpone its remaining scheduled fall flu clinics.

The department increased its attention to careful education of the public, making use of its website, local media, and a weekly "Flu-line" phone message to keep Cambridge residents and workers up to date on which groups were prioritized to receive seasonal or H1N1 vaccine at each scheduled clinic. Public Health and School Health nursing staff delivered educational presentations at Cambridge schools, daycares, shelters, the library, the Community Learning Center, CCTV, and public forums.

In response to unpredictable supply patterns, the department acted creatively to help vaccinate Cambridge residents and workers in compliance with CDC and Massachusetts priority guidelines. Pregnant women and caregivers of infants were able to receive H1N1 vaccinations by appointment at the department's offices on Windsor Street. Seasonal flu vaccination clinics were offered to first responders, homeless individuals, and seniors, with vaccinations offered to those in lower-risk groups when extra vaccine was available. School health staff collaborated with public schools, independent schools, and licensed daycare centers to provide H1N1 vaccinations to the city's youngest children. Due to the supply limitations, the department held its first public H1N1 flu clinic at Cambridge Hospital on November 19. Staff vaccinated 760 children and adults in four hours and this model was later replicated by CHA's Departments of Pediatrics and Ambulatory for vaccinating priority groups.

By December 30, over 3,200 doses of H1N1 vaccine had been administered to the CDC-established priority populations in Cambridge, many of them children and preschoolers who received the vaccine either in school or through their daycare providers. When two welcome pieces of news arrived – that the spread of H1N1 had slowed considerably and that vaccines for both kinds of flu were now sufficient for all who wished to be vaccinated – the department again adjusted its plans. Staff used both traditional and innovative means to publicize the message that vaccine was available for all and that the threat was not over. A seasonal flu vaccination clinic was quickly planned for all Cambridge residents, students, workers, and their families, held on December 12, and a major public H1N1 clinic already scheduled for January 9 was opened up to all and expanded to include seasonal flu vaccine as well.

Community Health Programs

The goal of the Division of Community Health Programs is to encourage healthy behaviors, influence public health policy, and promote opportunities to prevent disease and improve health. In 2009:

- The Men's Health League (1) continued to work with the Men's Health Team, a group of 10 men who provided community outreach and mentored participants in other MHL programs: (2)

organized three 12-week sessions of Fit for Life with 39 men at risk for developing heart disease or diabetes; (3) organized two 10-week sessions of Fitness Brothers, in which a total of 187 men made a commitment to exercise each week and support each other; (4) continued to run the Navigated Care program, helping 40 men access health insurance and primary care; and (5) hosted a “Men’s Health Breakfast” and seven other neighborhood events.

- The Men of Color Health Initiative sponsored its annual Hoops ‘n’ Health sports tournament and health fair in June, drawing 340 players and about 1,500 spectators; collaborated with the American Heart Association and St. Paul’s AME church to implement Power Sunday, a stroke awareness campaign; brought a focus on men’s health to the Cambridge NAACP’s annual Martin Luther King Breakfast; sponsored a healthy cooking demonstration for 60 men of color with help from the chef of the Coast Café, Anthony Brooks; and screened over 100 people at Area IV Pride Day, an annual community celebration.
- To support parents and caregivers in talking and reading with their young children, the Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative led 22 workshops for 236 participants; visited 902 new parents on the Cambridge Hospital’s maternity ward and in their homes; co-organized Family Literacy Fun Day, attended by 500 parents and children; gave 5 professional development workshops to 117 early care and education professionals; and distributed a total of 7,189 books to families. In collaboration with local community partners, the Agenda for Children continued the StoryWalk project in six Cambridge neighborhoods to promote literacy and physical activity.
- The Pathways to Family Success program provided wrap-around literacy and support programming to its core group of 15 families and its extended group of 50 families through 56 family literacy activities, as well as through one-on-one support.
- During the 2008–2009 school year, 2,933 children received classroom oral health education. In addition, staff provided dental screenings to 2,523 children (pre-K through grade 4) in 14 elementary schools. About 24% of these children were referred for treatment, of whom 3% required urgent care. Dental screenings were also given to 495 preschoolers, of whom 17% were referred for treatment.
- In a new collaboration with the Cambridge Prevention Coalition, community health staff launched a social marketing campaign, Reality Check, in December 2009 to reduce underage drinking. The campaign, which will run through 2010, is aimed at parents of middle school students, and includes traditional advertising as well as new media and social networking tools.
- In 2009, the department’s Domestic Violence Free Zone initiative focused on preventing and responding to domestic violence in the workplace. Department staff (1) provided domestic violence trainings to hospital workers, women’s groups, community agencies, and the Cambridge Licensing Board; (2) published a handbook, How to Respond to Employees Facing Domestic Violence, and offered related trainings; (3) launched a program called “Cut It Out Cambridge” which trains hair stylists in how to help clients who may be domestic violence victims; and (4) partnered with the Cambridge Prevention Coalition to conduct research on what role Cambridge bar and restaurant staff feel they have in violence prevention, and presented these findings at the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association.

Emergency Preparedness Activities

The goal of the department's Emergency Preparedness program is to increase preparedness of the City of Cambridge, other Region 4b communities, and the Cambridge Health Alliance. The program does this by creating systems (and opportunities to practice) for effective public health and health care response to emergencies and disasters. In 2009:

- Staff continued to work with state, local, and national partners on models for local public health mutual aid, emergency dispensing of medication and vaccines, training volunteers for public health emergency response, and communication of critical information to the public during emergencies and disaster response.
- Staff were instrumental in organizing Operation Granger, the department's second annual large-scale flu clinic, which served as a real-world demonstration of a mass dispensing operation. Local health care providers and Medical Reserve Corps volunteers were mobilized and trained on-site to provide vaccine safely and efficiently to a large number of people.
- Staff continued to prepare Cambridge Health Alliance staff for a range of possible emergencies and disasters. In 2009, staff organized multiple tabletop exercises at the Cambridge Hospital campus including scenarios of a bioterrorism incident, a mass casualty incident, and large-scale chemical exposure. Staff updated the CHA overall emergency response plan and emergency preparedness policies, and participated in orientation of all new staff. Staff facilitated the purchase of equipment, such as a high resolution ultrasound, and ensured that emergency department staff were trained to use such equipment.
- Staff designed five emergency communications drills for PEER (Partnership for Effective Emergency Response), a federally funded project managed by the Boston University School of Public Health. Three of those exercises were conducted in 2009. The exercises tested the ability of EMS, public health departments, hospitals, long-term care facilities, and community health centers in 63 communities to respond to Health and Homeland Alert Network notification and to use a web-based system to communicate with each other.
- Staff from the Cambridge and Springfield health departments were selected to represent the perspective of Massachusetts local public health departments at a September workshop on public participation in pandemic flu planning. The program was sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to discuss lessons learned from public participation projects conducted earlier this year.
- Staff continued to lead the hospital operations subcommittee of the Cambridge Local Emergency Planning Committee. In 2009, the committee's work was largely focused on preparing for and responding to pandemic influenza.
- Region 4b's Local Emergency Notification System was redesigned in 2009 to better serve the needs of the region. Regional staff worked with members of the Hinton State Lab Institute to conduct an exercise which tested the new system using the Massachusetts Health and Homeland Alert Network to send alerts to local health staff concerning infectious disease emergencies.

- With grant funds, staff continued to coordinate recruitment activities and facilitate trainings for the Region 4b Medical Reserve Corps, which has more than 2,000 volunteer members, including 77 Cambridge residents. On March 14, CPHD staff held a day-long training conference at which 109 volunteers participated. Reserve Corps members have participated in H1N1 vaccination clinics throughout the region.
- Staff collaborated with the Harvard School of Public Health Center for Public Health Preparedness to plan and conduct a functional exercise with 10 communities in Region 4b. The exercise scenario involved a large-scale outbreak and the use of MAVEN in managing the situation. Materials created from this exercise have been posted on-line for use by other states using the MAVEN system. Additionally, CPHD Regional Epidemiology staff produced a CD titled "Epi Essentials for Public Health Practitioners," which contains a training on managing a disease outbreak and a guide to create a simple health assessment. The CD is intended for small local public health departments that lack epidemiology resources.
- In June, the Cambridge Advanced Practice Center for Emergency Preparedness was recognized by the Center for Infectious Disease Research & Policy for developing and implementing a strategy for engaging vulnerable populations and their service providers in pandemic flu preparedness.
- In July, the Cambridge APC received a Model Practice Award from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for implementing mutual aid protocols at multi-town flu clinics.
- Federal funding for the Cambridge Advanced Practice Center ended on September 30. During the past five years, the Cambridge APC made significant contributions to the field of public health preparedness, and its tools and products have been adopted by local health departments throughout the country. In September, the Cambridge APC published its food and product recall tool, epidemiological tools, signs for emergency response, and decontamination signs on CD-ROM for distribution to hospitals, local health departments, and other municipal agencies throughout the country.
- Staff worked with partners from Cambridge city departments and with the Boston Mayor's Office of Emergency Preparedness, to develop a citywide tabletop exercise to test response to a scenario involving mass violence in a school.

Environmental Health Programs and Services

The goal of the Division of Environmental Health is to protect Cambridge residents, workers, and students from environmental threats that can lead to poor health. In 2009:

- In January, staff coordinated a multi-agency intervention at the Gateway Inn, a transitional assistance housing site near the Alewife T, to address a chronic bed bug infestation. As a result of this incident, the department requested that the two state agencies that work with homeless clientele provide information on bed bugs to families being placed in transitional housing sites in Cambridge

and have outreach workers log instances of bed bug and other pest activity during their regular site visits.

- Ultrafine particulates are emerging as an important factor in assessing the cardiac and respiratory health of communities that are exposed to emissions from major roadways. In 2009, staff continued to conduct ultrafine particulate testing in Central and Harvard Squares with community volunteers, graduate interns, and an air quality engineer. Results indicated that ultrafine levels encountered by pedestrians along commercial streets can be comparable to those near highways with moderately heavy traffic. In November, a team that included several community members and researchers from the Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Science, MIT, and the Museum of Science, was awarded a Harvard Catalyst grant to explore strategies for developing a citywide air quality monitoring plan.
- The Healthy Homes childhood asthma program conducted 47 home visits to families of young children with asthma, and provided information about asthma and lead poisoning prevention to residents, housing advocates, and other groups.
- Lead Safe Kids conducted lead poisoning prevention education activities and provided case management to children with elevated blood levels who reside in Cambridge and 35 neighboring communities. In 2009, the program served four Cambridge families and provided lead poisoning educational materials at eight Cambridge events held at Head Start preschools, WIC offices, public libraries, and health fairs.
- The division addressed environmental health issues involving a proposed biosciences campus in Kendall Square, pharmaceuticals in the drinking water, collection and disposal of unused pharmaceuticals and syringes, lead found in artificial turf on city fields, BPA (bisphenol A) and other contaminants in treated wood play structures, and rooftop equipment noise levels.

Epidemiology and Data Services

The Division of Epidemiology and Data Services provides key epidemiological, data management, and analysis support to all CPHD divisions. The goal of the division is to monitor the overall health status of Cambridge residents.

- In fall 2009, staff collaborated with Cambridge schools and universities to implement absenteeism and influenza surveillance systems in public and independent elementary and secondary schools and in Cambridge's three universities (Harvard, MIT, and Lesley). (See also Public Health Nursing Services and School Health.)
- The grant-funded Regional Epidemiologic Services Center, based at CPHD, continued to work closely with state public health officials in 2009 to implement the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN) in the 27 cities and towns in Massachusetts Region 4b.

- In October, the Division of Epidemiology and Data Services received a two-year, \$62,000 grant through the Boston University School of Public Health to develop open source, analytical software for local and state health departments.
- Staff received protocol approval from the CHA Institutional Review board for the ongoing Syndromic Surveillance for Disease Detection project. This system, developed and maintained by the Children's Hospital Informatics Program, detects disease outbreaks and aberrations in disease patterns. Department staff transmit CHA data daily to the system.
- Staff continued their ongoing collaboration with the Institute for Community Health (ICH) on data-related projects such as the 2008 Five Cities in Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey.
- The EDS division collaborated on many projects in 2009, including the Men's Health League, the Domestic Violence Program's "Cut It Out" initiative, the Environmental Health program, public health nursing, and the Inspectional Services Department. With each program, the division provided detailed data collection and analysis to meet specific needs.

Public Health Nursing Services

The goal of the department's Public Health Nursing Services is to enhance wellness and prevent disease among Cambridge residents and visitors. Facing a challenging year with two waves of H1N1 influenza, public health nurses responded to individual cases of H1N1 flu by working with patients and families affected, doing case investigations, and advising on disease containment. They also answered questions from concerned residents, gave guidance to schools and institutions, and delivered numerous presentations on flu throughout the spring, summer, and fall of 2009. Public health nurses, in collaboration with the divisions of School Health and Emergency Preparedness, vaccinated more than 2,500 individuals against seasonal flu, and more than 3,200 individuals against H1N1 flu. Also in 2009:

- Public health nursing staff followed up on 202 communicable disease cases. Epidemiology staff continued to monitor disease trends and emergency department data for unusual activity.
- In July, nursing staff responded to an infectious disease exposure at a university summer program in which an international student developed measles after exposing nearly 300 students and staff to the virus. In consultation with Massachusetts Department of Public Health epidemiologists, nursing staff vaccinated more than 200 exposed individuals. No new measles cases were reported as a result of the original exposure.
- Nursing staff continued to serve as case managers for patients with tuberculosis infection or disease. In 2009, patients with TB made 2,400 visits to the Schipellite Chest Center at the Cambridge Hospital campus and public health nurses made more than 650 home visits to patients with active TB. Staff also responded to separate TB exposures at a daycare center, a college, a department store, and a small business. This work involved assessing, educating, and performing skin tests on people who may have been exposed to infected individuals.

- The public health department and the CHA Department of Medicine collaborated on the Center for Public Health Care Training, a grant-funded program that immerses a rotating group of CHA medical residents in the basic principles and practice of public health. In 2009, public health nursing staff trained the residents in how to use a hepatitis B data-gathering tool during follow-up calls with primary care providers, and gave six presentations to participants on flu pandemics, tuberculosis, and other topics.
- Staff continued to provide monthly health seminars, exercise classes, and blood pressure screenings to Cambridge seniors. About 75 seniors regularly attend these meetings.

School Health Programs and Services

The goal of the Division of School Health is to help students in grades K-12 stay healthy and in school so they can reach their academic potential.

- In May and June, school nursing staff responded to H1N1 flu in the schools by implementing state recommendations for surveillance, screening and home isolation; coordinating efforts with primary care providers; and providing guidance to school administrators. In the fall, staff organized clinics at Cambridge public and independent schools to vaccinate students against both seasonal and H1N1 flu (see also “H1N1 and Seasonal Flu Planning and Response”).
- Cambridge public school students made 43,782 visits to school nurses during the 2008-2009 school year. Of these visits, only 4.1% resulted in dismissal for illness, 0.5% for injury, and 0.1% for emergency care. The low dismissal rate meant that the vast majority of CPS students who visited their school nurses were successfully treated and sent back to their classrooms with minimal interruption of their academic days.
- During the 2008-2009 school year, school nurses cared for more than 1,300 children diagnosed with a physical or developmental condition such as asthma, food allergies, or diabetes.
- In 2009, the school-based healthy weight program (1) conducted 26 cafeteria “tastings”; (2) introduced 20 new menu items in the Cambridge public schools; (3) produced annual health and fitness “progress reports”; (4) helped organize Fit Together events at two public schools; (5) in collaboration with the Title One program, organized four “Cooking & Learning” events for families of young children to teach healthy eating and literacy skills; (6) organized three trainings for after-school staff on healthy cooking for kids and one training for school food service staff on appropriate portion size; and (7) continued to support a student-run enterprise that sells local farm apples to after-school programs. In addition, staff helped secure state grants to provide free daily fruit and vegetable snacks at five public elementary schools in Cambridge and secured federal stimulus grants to purchase cooking equipment for two school kitchens.
- In January, School Health nursing staff began providing all health care oversight and clinical guidance to city-managed daycare and out-of-school-time programs, while Public Health nurses continued to serve as health care consultants for eight Cambridge daycare centers. As part of these contractual agreements, the nurses conduct on-site inspections, follow up on disease reports, review

health care policies, and provide training to teachers in medication administration and health education.

- The Cambridge School Health division along with the Institute of Community Health and other community partners are co-recipients of a 12-month Harvard Community Catalyst pilot grant: “Investigating Weight Disparities among African-American and Black Youth in Cambridge: Research and Community Partners Gear Up for Intervention” (see also the Institute for Community Health section).

Policy and Regulatory Activities

The Cambridge Public Health Department enforces existing laws and regulations pertaining to public health. The Department also has the statutory authority to make and enforce new public health regulations within the City of Cambridge. As a result of a Memorandum of Agreement signed in 1983 by the commissioner of health and hospitals and the inspectional services commissioner, the Inspectional Services Department assumes responsibility for several major categories of public health code enforcement. These functions include enforcement of the housing code, the restaurant code, construction-related nuisances, day camps, spas, and several other public health codes. The Cambridge Public Health Department assists in and supports these code enforcement duties as needed and pursues all other enforcement actions and investigations required under the public health code. In particular, concerns about harmful chemical or biological exposures are frequently referred to the public health department. Finally, the Cambridge Public Health Department retains the final authority, as granted to local boards of health under state law, to adjudicate all significant public health threats.

The Department currently enforces regulations relating to: biosafety (recombinant DNA and potentially dangerous pathogens), asbestos protection, tobacco control, laboratory animals, bodywork, body art, tanning salons, indoor ice skating rinks, burial permits, and funeral directors. In 2009:

- The Cambridge Public Health Department’s regulation to eliminate the use of artificial trans fat in city restaurants and other food service establishments took full effect on October 1. To prepare establishments and Inspectional Services staff for the new regulation, the department (1) launched a “Trans Fat Free” decal campaign in January to promote establishments that had voluntarily phased out products containing artificial trans fat; (2) provided multiple trainings to Inspectional Services staff that included mock restaurant inspections; and (3) produced a variety of educational materials for the nearly 1,000 establishments impacted by the regulation.
- After a public hearing in June and an extended open comment period, the department promulgated a biosafety regulation in October that extended the authority of the Cambridge Biosafety Committee to include non-recombinant biological research and manufacturing, particularly higher risk biological work, conducted in Cambridge. The new regulation also prohibits biosafety level four (BSL-4) laboratories – which handle some of the world’s deadliest pathogens – from operating in Cambridge. The regulation took effect on Dec. 31, 2009, and impacted more than 70 biotechnology firms and research institutions.

- At the request of the Cambridge City Manager, CPHD convened a task force in November to explore the benefits and feasibility of establishing a citywide food policy advisory group. The task force, whose members represent seven city departments, will submit a final report in early 2010.
- During inspections of the city's tobacco vendors in FY09, the rate of sales to minors was 10.4%. The state target is 10%. This represents an increase of 49% in Cambridge's rate of sales to minors compared to last year. One factor in the increase may be that with strong encouragement from the state, the minors used in the inspections looked much older than those who participated in past years.
- Staff conducted a detailed review of practices in all Cambridge tattoo/body art establishments to improve record-keeping, credentialing, and hygiene practices among these licensees.
- With a newly established state responsibility to enforce massage regulations, the Cambridge Public Health Department ceded oversight of most traditional massage modalities. The department chose to continue local licensing of many "alternative" modalities, however, which the state is not currently regulating.
- The Commissioner of Laboratory Animals inspects research facilities that use laboratory animals in the City of Cambridge and enforces city Ordinance 1086 by reviewing protocols, husbandry, and procedures. In 2009, there were 40 facilities using animals in research. The animals were primarily mice and rats, but also included a wide variety of other species.
- The department licensed 74 biotechnology labs; 5 body art establishments and 24 body art practitioners, 3 body work practitioners; 2 indoor ice rinks; and 3 tanning establishments.

Other CPHD Activities

- In January, the department produced a four-page bulletin titled *What Makes a Healthy City?* on six social determinants of health in Cambridge, with local and state data on these topics.
- CPHD, researchers at Harvard, MIT, and the Museum of Science, and community partners received a \$5,000 Harvard Catalyst planning grant to examine how Cambridge can measure air quality to meet public health goals.
- In April 2009, the Institute for Community Health and the Cambridge Public Health Department co-hosted the sixth annual "Real World Public Health" workshop for about 41 graduate students from the Harvard and Boston University schools of public health, Tufts School of Medicine, and Northeastern University. The event featured an overview of local public health and hands-on workshops (see Institute for Community Health).
- In summer 2009, seven graduate and college students completed field practicums and internships at CPHD in the following areas: men's health, substance abuse prevention, children's oral health, epidemiology, environmental health (air quality and nanotechnology), and early childhood literacy.

- Sam Lipson, the department's Director of Environmental Health, gave presentations to international audiences at two nanotechnology safety conferences (Seattle, WA and Amherst, MA) on the Cambridge health and safety policy for nanomaterials.
- In February, staff presented a poster session, "The Men's Health League: A Community Health Partnership for Men" at the Office of Minority Health's "National Partnership for Action to End Health Disparities" conference in Maryland.
- At the August CDC National Conference on Health Communication, Marketing, and Media, Stacey King, Health Promotion and Marketing Manager, and Charlie Ishikawa, Public Health Planner, presented on information design and dissemination for public health events.
- At the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association in November, staff presented on CPHD support for the Cambridge trans fat ban, research on involving bar staff in domestic violence intervention, and our efforts to improve the health of men of color.
- CPHD co-chaired the Senior Policy Group on Homelessness with the Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs, gathering homeless providers, public safety personnel, and the business community to craft mutually supportive policies and programs.
- CPHD played a leadership role in the consortium of Cambridge early-childhood providers designing and implementing "Baby U", Cambridge's reinvention of the Harlem Children's Zone parenting initiative. Funding has been identified to pilot a program which will provide 60 families with parent education and support in FY 2010.
- CPHD marketing staff provided consultation and support to the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce in the design of workplace health promotion efforts for Cambridge businesses.
- Chief Public Health Officer Claude-Alix Jacob received the 2009 "Drum Major for Health" award from the Cambridge NAACP branch at its annual Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial breakfast.
- Public health nurse Florence Grant, RN, received the 2009 TB Hero award from the New England Tuberculosis Consortium at a ceremony in September.

2009 Cambridge Highlights: The Community Affairs Department of the Cambridge Health Alliance

One of the greatest strengths of Cambridge Health Alliance is its ability to respond to community needs. The Department of Community Affairs (CAF) helps the Alliance address these needs through outreach efforts and innovative community health programs. Through these efforts, Community Affairs staff reach populations that may not have access to the health care system, informing them about health care services and helping reduce barriers to care.

Reaching Out About Depression (ROAD)

Reaching Out About Depression (ROAD) is a community-based program created by and for low-income women struggling with both poverty and depression. ROAD offers workshops that provide women with peer support and opportunities for networking and social action; an Advocacy Resource Team of law and counseling students; and a leadership development program for women who join the network so they can become agents of change in their communities. Eight Cambridge women continued as volunteer program “facilitators” who develop their leadership and advocacy skills by directing programming, facilitating workshops, and serving as peer advocates. In 2009:

- ROAD facilitators served 52 adult women directly through the workshop series, and provided child care to 22 children.
- The ROAD Advocacy Resource Team recruited, trained, and placed 22 advocates from Harvard Law School and Boston College. In total the advocates provided over 1,000 hours of direct advocacy to the women of ROAD.
- In 2009, ROAD women gave presentations to the Cambridge YWCA, the Somerville Guidance Center, CCTV BeLive, the Somerville Homeless Coalition, the Cambridge Community Learning Center, the New York Center for Children, the Somerville Mayor’s Task Force on Suicide Prevention, and Senator Steven Tolman’s office. Topics included depression and self-care, building communication between service providers and consumers, and the intersection of poverty and depression.
- In the spring of 2009, women who completed a ROAD workshop series created a community quilt, “Healthy Minds & Bodies = Healthy Communities” on the effects of cuts to mental health services, and participated in two lobby days at the Massachusetts State House.
- The ROAD leadership development program provided trainings for women on tenants’ rights, group processes, benefits advocacy, safety planning, and non-violent communication, as well as weekly yoga classes.
- ROAD women hosted regular social events in the Area IV community, including a Thanksgiving potluck, a “Holiday Cookie-off,” game nights, and a summer cookout.

Cambridge Health Alliance Breast Health Initiative

The Breast Health Initiative is a collaborative project of the Cambridge Health Alliance departments of Radiology, Medicine/Primary Care, and Community Affairs, with funding support from the Avon Foundation. Its goal is to improve mammography screening rates through enhanced breast health services, patient outreach, and patient education. In 2009:

- Staff conducted phone outreach to 612 CHA patients to encourage them to get a mammogram. While most of the 2009 outreach focused on clinic patients in CHA's MetroNorth area (Malden and Revere), 13 patients were from Cambridge health centers.
- In October, staff provided health information at breast health education tables at three sites in Cambridge.
- The Breast Health Initiative has been enhanced in 2009 by a grant from the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Komen funds support a new component of the Initiative that includes outreach to community organizations and community members to provide education on breast health and connect women to CHA breast health services. To determine how CHA can best assist these community organizations, a needs assessment by phone is currently underway.

Integrated Counseling, Testing, and Referral Program

The Integrated Counseling, Testing, and Referral (ICTR) Program provides confidential pre- and post-test counseling for people who may be infected with HIV, hepatitis C, chlamydia, gonorrhea, or syphilis. Services are offered regardless of a patient's ability to pay. The ICTR program also provides educational workshops about the transmission of these diseases, how to prevent them, and where to seek treatment. Services are provided in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and French. Interpreters are also available. In 2009:

- HIV counseling and testing clinics were available to Cambridge residents at the Windsor Street Health Center, the Zinberg Clinic at the Cambridge Hospital campus, and East Cambridge Health Center. Staff organized six HIV Counseling/Testing Days in Cambridge in 2009: two at East Cambridge Health Center, two at Windsor Street Health Center, one at Riverside Health Center, and one at North Cambridge Health Center. Staff and volunteers tested 90 people for HIV.
- The HIV Outreach Program participated in six community events in Cambridge in 2009, providing condoms and information about HIV prevention and services to more than 700 people.

Health Care for the Homeless

Health Care for the Homeless (HCH) provides primary and episodic health care to homeless adults and families at two sites in Cambridge: the Salvation Army Shelter and the CASPAR-Albany Street Shelter.

The program's mission is to provide health care services that are affordable, accessible, and acceptable to homeless men, women, and children. In 2009:

- Health Care for the Homeless providers treated more than 500 unique patients, who accounted for more than 2,500 visits.
- The Homeless Patient Committee at the Cambridge Hospital campus helped improve coordination of care between inpatient teams and the program's outpatient providers. Following the committee's recommendation, HCH staff now conduct hospital rounds twice weekly, and HCH staff have more input to inpatient teams.
- Last year, the program partnered with Heading Home, a homeless services agency, to provide medical and nursing services to 11 chronically homeless, disabled individuals (six of whom are from Cambridge) who were newly housed in Malden apartments. This year, staff are working to transition the primary care of these folks to more traditional settings. The CHA Malden Family Health Center has been a valuable partner.

Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)

The Cambridge/Somerville Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program continued to provide eligible families with nutrition counseling, breastfeeding support, referrals to health and social services, and checks to receive free healthy foods. WIC provides the services at two locations in Cambridge: the Windsor Street Health Center and the North Cambridge Housing Project at the Jefferson Park. WIC's goal is to keep pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women and children under five healthy. In 2009, the program served over 1,460 Cambridge residents. About 61% of eligible Cambridge residents participate in WIC.

In 2009, the Cambridge/Somerville WIC Program continued to work with the CHA Breastfeeding Task Force to coordinate breastfeeding support services for new moms, and was actively involved in the Cambridge Hospital's Baby-Friendly Initiative. Also in 2009, WIC implemented a new food package. The new food package offers participants greater variety and more culturally appropriate foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, canned fish, and soy products, and serves to reinforce the nutrition messages at WIC, include improving the quality of our families' diets, preventing obesity, and promoting breastfeeding.

Community Health Advisory Council

The Community Health Advisory Council is designed to provide input and recommendations to the newly formed Committee on Community and Public Health, a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees. The members are a diverse group of community leaders representing a wide variety of health and human service organizations. The Council reviews key community health problems and the role of Cambridge Health Alliance in addressing these problems in a collaborative fashion with its community partners.

In 2009, the topics addressed at the bimonthly meetings included CHA's financial crisis and its service reconfiguration plan, wellness in an urban setting, and the results of a Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey conducted in Cambridge and CHA's other communities.

2009 Cambridge Highlights: Clinical Services of Cambridge Health Alliance

Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) is an integrated health system that provides comprehensive clinical, public health, teaching, and research programs. In 2009, CHA continued to offer care to all Cambridge residents at sites across the city. In agreement and negotiation with the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Health and Human Services, CHA also completed a service reconfiguration that resulted in a leaner, more efficient, and more viable health care system. The ultimate goal of this effort was to ensure that residents would continue to have access to high-quality and culturally sensitive health care services in Cambridge now and in the years ahead.

Quality

In 2009, CHA continued building upon its already strong quality performance. CHA continues to excel in its performance on public (core) measures. Nationally, out of the 22 care processes related to the core measures, CHA is above the National Average in 21 of the measures and is at the 75th percentile or higher for 7 of the measures.

- The laboratories and point-of-care sites at Cambridge Health Alliance successfully passed the College of American Pathologists (CAP) accreditation survey.
- Cambridge Health Alliance also continues its commitment to protecting its communities. In advance of the H1N1 vaccine distribution, Cambridge Health Alliance created plans to vaccinate the most vulnerable and at-risk members of its staff, patient, and community populations. As a result, Cambridge Health Alliance had vaccinated over 61% of its staff against the H1N1 virus and 71% of its staff against the seasonal flu virus by the end of 2009. CHA also focused on vaccinating all of its high-risk patients, and administered over 25,000 doses of H1N1 vaccine and over 34,000 doses of seasonal flu vaccine to its patients.
- Cambridge Health Alliance received full designation as a primary stroke center from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Primary Care

In 2009, CHA continued to provide primary care services for children, adolescents, adults, and seniors, including more than 10,000 Cambridge residents.

- To improve the delivery and efficiency of care, CHA merged its three smallest primary care sites in Cambridge with larger facilities. This was done in collaboration with the community, and resulted in enhanced care for patients in more central locations.
- CHA now offers primary care at seven practices within the city. And, with more concentrated services, six of these locations are now able to provide evening or weekend hours. Four locations also see patients of all ages through a mix of Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, and Family Medicine providers.

- Cambridge Health Alliance's Pediatrics department was named to the Harvard Pilgrim Honor Roll for the third straight year for excellent patient outcomes. Designation is given to hospitals that ranked in the top 25%.
- CHA continues to provide culturally sensitive primary care through its Health Care for the Homeless program and Zinberg HIV clinic.

Emergency Medicine

The Emergency Department (at all three sites) is experiencing its highest volume while also experiencing its highest patient satisfaction (Press-Ganey) scores in its history. In addition to the department's strong clinical leadership, much of this success is due to expansion of the rapid assessment and treatment protocols with an electronic triage and tracking system. The system has improved patient flow, quality of care, teamwork, and reporting and evaluation to all sites, and has reduced turnaround time by 30 minutes. Today, 95% of CHA patients are able to see a doctor within one hour of arrival.

- In 2009, Cambridge residents made more than 13,000 visits to CHA for emergency care.

Breast Health

Women who visit the Cambridge Hospital campus can receive next-day screening mammography. If necessary, they can also receive quick follow-up appointments, including stereotactic biopsy and comprehensive care for all forms of breast disease.

In summer 2009, the Cambridge Breast Center became the first Center in the Commonwealth to earn accreditation from the National Program for the Accreditation of Breast Centers. In addition, the Cambridge Hospital campus was named a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiology (ACR). The ACR also reviewed CHA's breast ultrasound and ultrasound-guided biopsy procedures and awarded CHA a three-year accreditation in both areas. CHA's mammography and mammography biopsy facilities had previously been granted accreditation.

In FY09, CHA performed more than 8,000 mammographies at the Cambridge Hospital campus. This includes both screening and diagnostic mammography. Women needing advanced care for breast health issues made more than 2,500 visits to the Cambridge Breast Center service.

Obstetrics/Gynecology and Women's Health

CHA's Women's Health team includes a diverse group of midwives, obstetricians, and family medicine physicians. Together, they provide care for women of all ages, including well-woman care, gynecological surgery, and maternity services. CHA continues to offer traditional maternity care at the Cambridge Hospital and natural childbirth at the Cambridge Birth Center. In 2009:

- CHA recruited two OB/GYN physicians to fill vacancies in the system. The physicians started work in January and October, respectively.
- CHA also recruited Leslie Ludka, CNM, MSN, to serve as Director of the Cambridge Birth Center. Ludka previously served as the Director of Midwifery at Brigham & Women's Hospital.
- The birth center was reaccredited by the national Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers, making it one of only two accredited birth centers in Massachusetts.
- The birth center was also named "Baby Friendly" by the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative- a global program sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF.

Inpatient Medical Care

In 2009, CHA moved two important inpatient services – a medical-surgical floor and an intermediate care unit – from Somerville Hospital to the Cambridge Hospital campus.

The change benefits CHA and the community in a number of ways. For example, Cambridge Hospital now has hospitalists (doctors who manage the care of hospitalized patients in coordination with primary care physicians and specialists) on duty 24 hours for patients. Teaching opportunities for medical residents have been enhanced. As these medical-surgical units are now co-located, the system is also able to capitalize on greater efficiencies of care.

To provide space for the new medical-surgical units, CHA closed its small inpatient pediatrics unit. However, the impact on patient care was minimal. CHA formed a partnership with Massachusetts General Hospital for Children in which young patients needing overnight hospital care are now transferred to MGH and admitted directly. This ensures that children will get expert inpatient care in a timely and convenient manner.

Other Specialty Services

- **Medical Specialties:** CHA recruited a new Chief of Cardiology, Dr. Deepak Thatai, who started in January 2009. Dr. Thatai holds joint privileges with Massachusetts General Hospital, giving CHA patients direct access to invasive cardiac care whenever needed at this partner institution.
- **Neurology:** Rachel Nardin, MD was appointed as the new Chief of Neurology. Dr. Nardin is an assistant professor of neurology at the Harvard Medical School and has published research on peripheral nerve disorders. Prior to coming to Cambridge Health Alliance, Dr. Nardin spent a decade at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. Dr. Nardin received her Medical Doctorate from Harvard Medical School.
- **Radiology:** In spring 2009, CHA completed installation of a state-of-the-art, 16-channel Siemens magnetic resonance scanner (MRI) at the Cambridge Hospital campus. The scanner performs tests faster than the previous equipment, giving patients quicker access to care. It also allows CHA to

provide enhanced imaging services (such as breast biopsies and cardiac imaging), and allows for imaging on heavier patients, up to 550 pounds.

- **Anticoagulation Management:** The CHA Pharmacy expanded its Anticoagulation Management Service to include the Cambridge Primary Care Center at the Cambridge Hospital campus. This program provides expert monitoring of more than 300 patients who are on blood thinners to ensure that they remain healthy.

Mental Health

CHA continued to serve as a safety net provider of mental health services for children, adolescents, adults, and seniors. As part of the 2009 service reconfiguration, CHA moved its award-winning Adolescent Assessment Unit from Somerville Hospital to the Cambridge Hospital campus. As a result, the inpatient Child and Adolescent units are now located together, which benefits both clinical care and operations. CHA also moved its child development services to Cambridge Hospital, making this campus its hub for child psychiatry services.

Academics and Research

CHA is an academic leader affiliated with Harvard Medical School, Harvard School of Public Health, Harvard School of Dental Medicine, and the Tufts University School of Medicine. It is known nationally for providing training in community-based medicine, which serves local families by bringing physicians from hard-to-recruit specialties into the Cambridge community.

In 2009, CHA had another successful recruitment year. In July, more than 50 new residents and trainees joined CHA in the departments of Medicine, Psychiatry, Family Medicine, and Podiatry. These doctors completed their education at some of the nation's finest medical schools, including Harvard, Vanderbilt, Boston University, UMass, Tulane, and the University of Chicago.

In other academic news, Dr. Randy Wertheimer, Chief of Family Medicine at CHA, was named Jaharis Family Chair of Family Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine. This prestigious position will allow CHA to develop greater partnerships with Tufts in many areas.

CHA continues to be a force in the arena of research with prominent research noted by prestigious journals and has caught the eye of many media outlets, including the NBC Nightly News, CNN, CBS Evening News, the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, and WBUR.

Information Technology

In 2009, CHA launched an electronic prescription system at its Cambridge sites. This system connects CHA to many local pharmacies, making it easier for patients to have prescriptions filled and reducing wait times. The outpatient pharmacy at the Cambridge campus also introduced new automation technology which speeds up the fulfillment of prescriptions and enhances patient safety.

CHA continues to roll out its electronic medical record system to all outpatient sites. The electronic medical record is now available at CHA's specialty sites. This allows CHA primary care providers and specialists to communicate over a secure network, sharing lab results and patient histories in real time. This helps improve the quality and timeliness of care.

2009 Cambridge Highlights: Institute for Community Health

The Institute for Community Health (ICH) is a collaborative effort of three Harvard teaching affiliates: Massachusetts General Hospital, Mount Auburn Hospital, and Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA). The mission of ICH is to improve the health of residents in Cambridge, Somerville, and surrounding towns through community-based participatory research, evaluation and research, program and policy development, and education and training. Dr. Karen Hacker, ICH Executive Director and Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, and the staff have established trusting relationships with community leaders and helped build capacity in these communities to understand and integrate evaluation efforts into public health programming.

The Institute has been involved in projects which have improved community health, built community capacity, and translated research and evaluation results into community action programs and policies. Core elements of the ICH mission are improving access to quality health care, working on community-relevant concerns, involving diverse partners, and respecting the diversity of the communities ICH serves. In 2009, ICH partnered with the Cambridge Public Health Department, Cambridge Health Alliance, and many local agencies and coalitions to improve and expand public health programming in Cambridge.

Children's Mental Health

ICH continued to lead efforts to integrate physical and behavioral health care for children, adolescents, and families in Cambridge and neighboring communities. The Collaborative Steering Committee for this effort includes local agencies, as well as parents and the Cambridge Prevention Coalition.

- Mental health screening continued at several Cambridge Health Alliance pediatric and family medicine sites. In 2009, another Cambridge site was added, bringing the total to nine in Cambridge and one in Somerville. Since the project began in 2003, this service has been provided to more than 11,000 young patients.
- In order to follow up on screening, and better integrate mental health and primary care, mental health professionals are located at two Cambridge pediatric sites (Cambridge Pediatrics, Teen Health) and pediatricians have access to psychiatrists by phone as needed.

Harvard Catalyst

- ICH has served as the lead organization for the community-based participatory research program at the Harvard Clinical and Translational Research Center (Harvard Catalyst), whose goal is to help move research from the bench, to clinical practice and community implementation. ICH provided technical assistance and brokered connections with research personnel for three seed grants in Cambridge Health Alliance:
 - Body Mass Index disparities in African Americans

- Decreasing television viewing
- Improving Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) clinical care

The Harvard Catalyst ultimately funded three pilot projects including efforts focused on BMI disparities, improving ADHD clinical care and community involvement in air quality monitoring.

Obesity Prevention and Physical Activity Promotion

ICH continues as a major partner in obesity prevention and the promotion of physical activity in Cambridge:

- Although childhood obesity trends have appeared to stabilize among children in the Cambridge Public Schools, in spring 2008, 16.9% of students (K–8) were obese (BMI > 95th percentile for age and gender) compared with 17.4% in 2009. Obesity rates are significantly lower than spring 2005 (20%); however ICH will carefully track data going forward to assure we maintain success in reducing obesity in Cambridge students.
- A journal article describing the Cambridge efforts to promote healthy weight and fitness will be published in the January 2010 edition of *Obesity*.
- ICH, with Cambridge School Health staff and community partners, was awarded a 12-month Harvard Community Catalyst pilot grant entitled “Investigating Weight Disparities among African-American and Black Youth in Cambridge: Research and Community Partners Gear Up for Intervention.”
- ICH continued to serve on a community task force on Healthy Playgrounds and Parks, which outlined principles to be considered in designing new play spaces to meet the physical and developmental needs of the city’s children.
- Dr. Virginia Chomitz of ICH was awarded the J. David Naparstek Community Mentor Award by the Tufts University Public Health and Professional Degree Programs at the School of Medicine.

Public Health Systems Research

- In its final year of funding from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), the Cambridge Advanced Practice Center focused its efforts on developing products to support local public health practitioners in their emergency training, planning, and response activities. ICH continued in its role as evaluator. ICH received a Promising Practice Award this year from NACCHO for its Emergency Preparedness Capacity Assessment instrument, designed to help local public health officials track their progress towards key preparedness planning goals.
- In April 2009, the Institute for Community Health and the Cambridge Public Health Department co-hosted the sixth annual “Real World Public Health” workshop for about 41 graduate students from the Harvard and Boston University schools of public health, Tufts School of Medicine, and

Northeastern University. The event featured an overview of local public health and hands-on workshops (see Cambridge Public Health Department).

Other ICH Activities

- ICH continued to evaluate literacy and family support work for the Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative. The ICH evaluation focuses on two primary areas: (1) the Literacy Ambassador Program, in which a diverse group of outreach workers bring the “Let’s Talk” message to hard-to-reach populations, and (2) the impact of the “Let’s Talk” message on parents and caregivers, specifically how they talk and read with children.
- Through collaboration with Massachusetts General Hospital, the Cambridge Health Alliance Department of Community Affairs, Somerville Health Department, and Mount Auburn Hospital, ICH conducted a local survey using the CDC-created Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. The survey was conducted in Cambridge and four other municipalities and was completed in 2009.
- ICH continued to coordinate and staff the Healthy Children Task Force (HCTF), which promotes healthy eating, active living, and positive mental health. HCTF priorities for 2009 are focused on health for school success.
- ICH continues to partner with the Cambridge Prevention Coalition’s Overdose Prevention & Education Network. ICH has designed a mixed-methods evaluation of local strategies to reduce fatal and nonfatal opioid overdoses in Cambridge. The primary focus areas of the evaluation are: 1) change in individuals’ knowledge about overdose prevention, recognition and response, and 2) change in the capacity of the city of Cambridge to address this serious health issue.
- In 2009, ICH continued to work with Youth on Fire, a program of Cambridge Cares About AIDS (CCA), to evaluate Phoenix Rising, a trauma-informed HIV, hepatitis and substance abuse prevention intervention for homeless young adults. Developed in partnership with the Boston Trauma Center, Phoenix Rising is a low-barrier, low-threshold intervention designed to build the capacity of young adults to develop healthy coping skills and raise awareness about the link between trauma and high-risk behaviors, such as substance abuse and unprotected sex. To date, 91 young adults have enrolled in the intervention.
- In October 2008, Cambridge Cares About AIDS was awarded funding from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation to conduct a one-year needs assessment focusing on HIV-related disparities among black MSM (men who have sex with men) living with HIV/AIDS in the Greater Boston area. ICH was contracted to help plan and implement a research component to this initiative. Rather than pursue a traditional needs assessment, CCA and its consumer advisory board decided that experiences of racism, discrimination, poverty and other inequities were best explored using artistic expression. Cambridge Cares About AIDS staff developed a six-week program of games, exercises, and dialogue designed to help participants analyze their past in the context of the present. Major findings highlight the many consequences of living with “triple stigma” – being Black, HIV-positive, and gay.

- Facilitated by ICH, the Men's Health League partnership has engaged in a participatory evaluation process since the inception of the program in 2008 (See also "Community Health" in CPHD section.) In 2009, ICH staff gave presentations at two national conferences and one regional conference about the Institute's evaluation work for the Men's Health League.
- ICH continued to collaborate with the CHA departments of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Community Affairs, and the Victims of Violence program on the Prevention Against Violent Experiences (PAVE) project. Since 2007, PAVE has been using Authorware software for computerized domestic violence screening in multiple languages at the Cambridge and Somerville Women's Centers. The software is appropriate for people with low levels of literacy. Since January 2008, 382 women have been screened. Of this group, 21% reported having experienced some type of domestic violence, and 9 % reported that domestic violence was a current issue in their lives.
- Dr. Karen Hacker and ICH were awarded the Sister Jeanette Normandin award for their work by Cambridge Cares About AIDS.